

NEW YORK TIMES

17 AUG 1972

NARCOTICS STUDY BY U.S. CONCEDES PROBLEM IS HUGE

Only 'Small Fraction' of the
Illicit Flow Is Seized,
Cabinet Panel Finds

WORLD TRAFFIC TRACED

International Crime Rings
Said to Reap Big Profits
—New York Key Point

By BERNARD GWERTZMAN.

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Aug. 16 —

The Government, in an unusually candid report on worldwide drug traffic, said today that despite increased enforcement efforts the United States and other countries were able to seize only "a small fraction" of the total illegal flow of heroin.

The 111-page survey, under preparation for nine months by the Cabinet Committee on International Narcotics Control, which groups all the United States agencies involved in the problem, surveyed the world scene. The picture that emerged was anything but encouraging.

The report noted that New York was the main distribution point for heroin smuggled into the United States from Europe. [Details on Page 16.]

The report noted that on enforcement efforts in the last two years had led to mounting seizures, but it concluded that "the rising level of seizures still represents only a small fraction of the illicit flow."

"The international heroin market almost certainly continues to have adequate supplies to meet the demand in consuming countries," it said.

High Profits are Noted

The report, "World Opium survey 1972," the most comprehensive of its kind, noted that international criminal

"cartels" seemed to control the wholesale opium and heroin trade, and apparently reaped "high rates of return on their investment."

As an example of the illegal profits made in the heroin trade, the report said that on an investment of \$120,000 to \$300,000, French Corsicans, who it said run the European trade, normally receive about \$1-million from dealers in New York for 100 kilograms of heroin. A kilogram is 2.2 pounds.

And then, on street sale in New York, a kilogram of pure heroin would sell for \$200,000 — or \$22-million for 100 kilograms, the report said.

The report was put together by the State Department, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, the Customs Bureau, and the Treasury. It was completed in July and released by the State Department after a meeting at the White House, this morning of the Cabinet committee, which is headed by Secretary of State William P. Rogers.

Efforts Are Described

Perhaps to counter the discouraging tone of the report, the State Department also released a "fact sheet" describing efforts by the Administration to counter what President Nixon has called "America's public enemy No. 1."

The report included comments, often caustic or uncomplimentary, about many nations with which the United States has friendly relations.

Success in developing international policing organizations has been slow, the report said, "largely because of widely varying national attitudes toward the drug problem."

These differences "are regularly and skillfully exploited by the illicit international trafficker," it said.

It noted that efforts were underway to curtail the growing of the opium poppy—the source of heroin—but that because of local conditions these programs "are unlikely to be successful unless accompanied by serious changes in a number of long-standing social and economic traditions."

The report said that a minimum of 200 tons of illegal opium was available for the international market in 1971 and, in addition, "there were undoubtedly substantial stocks

and processed opium, morphine base, and heroin held by growers, processors, or traffickers."

In 1971, total seizures amounted to 21.6 tons of opium equivalent, and the seizures in the first quarter of this year reached 9 tons.

The report was released the day before Harper & Row is publishing a controversial book, "The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia," by Alfred W. McCoy. It charges that the C.I.A. and other United States agencies for political reasons supported Asians involved in drug trade.

When this was pointed out to a ranking State Department official later, he maintained that the dual publication was "purely coincidental." He said the Government report had been "in the works" for a long time, and had received its final approval this morning at the White House meeting.

The Government report described in some detail how illicit opium and its derivatives — mainly heroin — were marketed. It said "the primary complex," which leads to the largest deliveries to the United States, begins in Turkey, encompasses many countries in Western Europe and the Western Hemisphere and terminates in the United States.

A second complex is the Southeast Asian market — with the opium grown in the "golden triangle" of Burma, Thailand and Laos. This complex serves mostly addicts and users in the area. The report said that the withdrawal of American forces from Vietnam had hurt production.

A third complex, composed of India, Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan, also serves addicts in the area, mostly in Iran, but the report said the second and third complexes "are of interest also because of their potential for becoming important suppliers of opium for the international heroin market, in the future, particularly is the primary complex falters."

Describing how the illegal drugs move to markets, the report said the smuggler's methods "are limited only by the scope of his imagination."

It said that the most popular method of smuggling opium and morphine base from Turkey into Western Europe, for manufacture into heroin, is the use of "specially constructed compartments or 'traps' built into passenger cars, commercial trucks, and touring buses."

"Much of the morphine base is concealed in trucks carrying bonded consignments of legitimate cargo which has been sealed with a customs band," it said. "These sealed trucks,

operating under international customs arrangements, will usually be allowed to travel across various national frontiers with little or no controls. The great number of such trucks traveling into Western Europe precludes any systematic inspection."

The smuggling by sea, less popular now than several years ago, "still accounts for a large amount of narcotics entering France," while smuggling by air is "the least favored smuggling method," the report said.

The route taken from Turkey overland passes through Bulgaria or Greece to Yugoslavia. From there, the drugs are taken either to West Germany through Austria or to France through Italy.

"The most common entry points for narcotics transported by ships are Marseilles, Barcelona, Venice, Trieste, Genoa, and Naples, and to a lesser extent, Bari, Brindisi and Piraeus," it said.

The greatest change in smuggling patterns, the report said, is that West Germany has become "a major opium and morphine base storage depot and staging area."

Latin Route Developing

Once in France, the morphine base is refined into heroin by small, mobile laboratories.

"The French heroin traffic is believed to be dominated by a few large trafficking groups," the report said. "The most common factor in virtually every major trafficking group over the last 20 years is the preponderance of French Corsicans. It is this ethnic group above all others that has controlled the heroin traffic in France."

The heroin is then smuggled into the United States either directly from France, often

concealed in cars or unaccompanied baggage, or through third countries.

"Since 1969, heroin smuggled via the Latin American route has accounted for about one-third of the seizures," the report said. "Although little is known about French-Latin American connections, it appears that well-organized smuggling rings in Latin America purchase large quantities of heroin from French traffickers and then arrange for its transport and sale to the United States. Many of the leaders of these Latin-American groups are ethnic French Corsicans."

MORI/CDF

continued